

*Account of a singular Discovery of Bones in Christ-Church Priory, Hampshire. By Gustavus Brander, Esq; In a Letter to the President.*

Read at the SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES, Jan. 19, 1775.

D E A R S I R,

HAVING lately made a purchase of the site of the Priory of Christchurch Twynham, in the county of Hampshire, upon clearing away the rubbish down to the foundation, in order to come at the ichnography of the building, amidst a variety of apartments, I plainly traced out the refectory, a room about thirty-six feet by twenty; on the East side of which was a door-way that led into another room twenty feet by eighteen, in which towards the South were two Gothic windows. In the Easternmost window, near where I suppose the altar to have stood, the walls being at the least five feet thick, was a font hollowed out of the solid stone of a pentangular form, and a hole in the center to let the water off; circumstances sufficient to infer it to have been the private chapel of the Prior. Two feet within the same from the door-way I discovered a square stone two feet nine inches by two feet, well soldered into the adjoining pavement with lead, having the appearance of a grave: but how great was my surprize, on opening it, to find it only a repository for about half a bushel

of



of birds bones, such as bitterns, herons, cocks and hens, many of which have long spurs and mostly well preserved: the place was about two feet deep, and lined with square stone.

My worthy friend Thomas Astle, Esq; was present at the discovery, which was thought not improper to lay before the Society of Antiquaries, over which you preside with so much lustre. But first it may not be amiss to note, that, in the time of King Edward the Confessor (according to Tanner), here was a dean and twenty-four secular canons, which afterwards were changed into regulars of the order of St. Austin, the foundation of this house being of a very early date. I submit to your better judgement, as a conjecture only, whether this Christian temple might not have been erected in the early ages, on the very spot on which a Pagan temple had stood; the founders of which, to avoid giving offence, and the more to conciliate the new worship to the Heathens, deposited their superstition in the afore-related respectful manner. I have the honor to be, with the greatest regard,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient,

most humble servant,

London, Dec. 27,  
1774.

GUSTAVUS BRANDER.

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In opening a vault in the foundation of St. Mary's abbey, York, a number of fowls bones were thrown out, which I saw when I was last there about five years ago. R. G.

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